THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid down on the table of the House.

Amendment of Working Journalists Act

2617. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Working Jounrnalists Act for free and healthy press; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RADHAKISHAN MALAVIYA): (a) Government has always upheld the freedom of the press and has urged that it works in a healthy and responsible manner so as to fulfil its legitimate role in a free and democratic society such as ours. This is a larger issue which need not be linked to a specific piece of legislation like the Working Journalists and Other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955. In any case, there is no proposal before Government to amend this Act.

(b) Does not arise.

कपास का उत्पादन लक्ष्य

2618. **श्री मीर्जा इर्शादबेग** : क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) पिछले वर्ष लम्बे तथा छोटे रेशे वाली कपास के उत्पादन का राज्यवार क्या लक्ष्य रखा गया था ; इस कपास से राज्यवार, कितनी आय हुई ;

(ख) किसानों को कपास की मुख्य किस्मों के लिए क्या-क्या दाम हासिल हुए ;

(ग) क्या गत वर्ष की तुलना में इस वर्ष कपास के लिए कम मूल्य दिये गये; यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं ; और

(घ) कपास के आयात और निर्यात के सम्बन्ध में क्या-क्या योजनाएं हैं ?

कृषि मंत्रालय में कृषि और सहकारिता विभाग में राज्य मंत्री (श्री श्याम लाल यादव) : (क) कपास के लम्बे और छोटे रेशे के उत्पादन के राज्यवार लक्ष्य निर्धारित नहीं किये जाते हैं ।

(ख) पिछले कपास वर्ष के दौरान किसानों ने भिन्न-भिन्न समय पर चल रहे कपास के मंडी मूल्य प्राप्त किए । यह मूल्य न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्यों से अधिक थे ।

(ग) जी हां । मुख्यत: पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले इस वर्ष अधिक उत्पादन होने के कारण ही ऐसा हुआ है । लेकिन, अब भी मूल्य न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य से काफी अधिक हैं ।

(घ) कपास के शुल्क के बिना आयात की अनुमति हैंडलूम क्षेत्र के लिए धागे की अटिटयों की सप्लाई के लिए तथा अग्रिम लाईसेंस के आधार पर सूती धागे, सूती कपड़े और बने बनाए कपड़ों के निर्यात के प्रति दी जाती है ।

जहां तक निर्यात का संबंध है, भारत सरकार ने इस वर्ष बंगाल देशी कपास की एक लाख से अधिक गांठें निर्मुक्त की हैं ।

Purchase of iodised salt declared unfit for human consumption by NCCF

2619. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the then Regional Manager (East & West) of NCCF in 1983-84 awarded the contract for procuring

iodised salt in a clandestine manner to three Ahmedabad based parties without following any proper procedure;

(b) whether it is a fact that all three parties were in fact three different names of one management having same persons behind them;

(c) whether supply contract was repeatedly awarded to these three parties without following established procedure irrespective of the fact that stocks supplied by them were rejected; and

(d) whether NCCF has suffered heavy losses due to said rejection of substandard salt which has been lying unattended for three years at Silchar and Calcutta?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) NCCF suffered losses on account of non lifting of Iodised Salt from Silchar by Government of Mizoram in 1985-86 and there was no purchase of Iodised Salt during 1983-84. The Iodised salt purchased by its Calcutta branch had been disposed of earning profit.

Controlled cloth and Janata cloth supplied by Kanpur Branch of NCCF

2620. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 3124 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 19th August, 1988 and state:

(a) whether any disciplinary action has been taken against the then Regional Manager of NCCF for the said irregularities;

(b) if not, by when Government propose to do the needful;

(c) whether enquiry against the said officer in case of other irregularities has been completed by now; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and penalty, if any proposed to be awarded to the said officer?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) and (b) The departmental enquiry initiated against the Regional Manager concerned is in final stages of completion. It is not possible to fix any time-limit for the purpose.

(c) and (d) The NCCF have already conducted a fact-finding enquiry into the allegations/irregularities referred to in the letter of the ex-President and the departmental enquiry has been initiated on that basis. The question on imposition of penalty would arise only after the departmental enquiries have been completed.

Loss to NCCF on supply of rice to foreign buyer

2621. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the NCCF Officers responsible for shipping 2635 Mts of PR-106 quality rice which is almost double the price of IR-8 quality rice;

(b) whether it was a conspiracy on the part of the said NCCF officers to give undue benefit to the foreign buyer at the cost of the NCCF and deprive the country of much needed foreign exchange to that extent;

(c) whether Government propose to conduct departmental enquiry to fix the responsibility; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) NCCF have reported that according to the information available, about 2635 MTs of PR-106 rice were shipped after damage of stocks of rice at Kandla port and that the price of PR-106 rice was not double the price of IR-8.

(b) to (d) The NCCF have filed a case in the High Court of Delhi against the insurance company and the matter is